

GR's Corner

The BIA IHSP has undergone some major changes in the last 6 months.

There have been some highs but there have also been some lows and a few setbacks. But, throughout it all our focus and commitment has not changed. If anything, it is stronger. We are absolutely dedicated to providing resources and the best technical assistance that we can to all of the Tribes in this country.

We are taking some bold steps and reaching out to partners across this country with one goal in mind: To reduce motor vehicle crashes throughout Indian Country and save lives.

This year we are contracting with more Tribes than ever before and the projects are being funded at levels unseen before. We have rolled up our sleeves and are doing all that we can to improve traffic safety within Indian Country.

Tribal officers working within this program are some of the most dedicated that we have ever had—they ARE making a difference.

This program is not satisfied with the status quo—we are prepared to keep going the distance. Our work is paying off—seat belt usage is higher in Indian Country and early data analysis shows us that there



are less deaths as a result of motor vehicle crashes on the reservations. Even with these strides, there is still much more to do.

The BIA IHSP staff is here and we are willing to do whatever it takes to make this one of the most viable programs in this country. In order to do that—we need the help and assistance from our partners and the Tribes. Working together—we can and we will make a difference.

Respectfully,

Paul J. Holley

BIA Hosts Grant Writing Class

The BIA IHSP hosted its annual Grant Writing Class, March 5-6, 2008 at the Sandia Resort in Albuquerque, NM. Approximately 70 people, representing 25 Tribes attended the class.

In addition, representatives from the Arizona Governor's Highway Safety Office, the Washington State

Highway Safety Office and the Indian Health Service also attended the class.

Pat Tucker, Regional Program Manager, served as the instructor for the 2-day class. After the class ended, several Tribes received hands-on technical assistance for grants they were preparing to meet the FY09 pro-

positional deadline. Because of the interest shown this year, the BIA IHSP is looking at conducting 2 classes in different parts of the country in FY09 to help Tribes prepare for submitting FY10 applications.

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New LEL On-Board

The BIA Indian Highway Safety Program is pleased to introduce its new Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL) Officer, Bernard (Bernie) Velasquez.

Bernie, as he likes to be called, joined the BIA IHSP on February 24, 2008. He comes to the program with a wealth of knowledge and experience in law enforcement.

Prior to joining the BIA IHSP, Bernie worked as a police officer for the BIA for 15 years. After leaving the BIA, he accepted a job as a police officer for the Albuquerque Aviation Police Department where he worked for more than 2 years before accepting the job as Chief of Police for the Laguna Tribe in New Mexico.

Bernie served as Chief at Laguna for 5

years before leaving to open and operate his own background investigations business. After 13 successful years of conducting background investigations, he sold the business and began contracting with Tribal LE agencies.

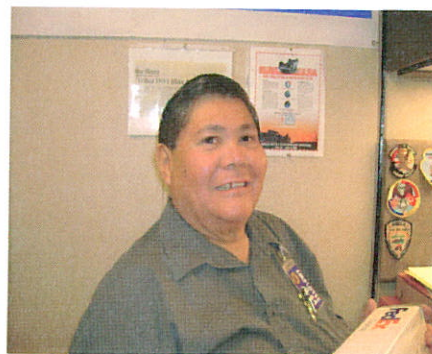
In addition to his work as the LEL for the BIA IHSP, Bernie currently contracts with the Tesuque Tribe.

"It feels good to be working with the Tribal police officers again" Bernie said. "Some of them I have known for years. I'm looking forward to using my contacts to help build a strong network of Tribal law enforcement officers who are dedicated to saving lives on the reservations" he continued.

Bernie, a Laguna Tribal member, has

already spent time at the NHTSA Region 6 office and recently completed TOPS training.

Bernie can be reached at (505) 563-5374.



BIA Partnership Meeting

NHTSA Region 6 served as the host for the BIA's Partnership meeting in January 2008. People attending the meeting included: Pat Abeyta—BIA Highway Safety Program Coordinator, Kathy Wilson—IHS, Evelyn Avant—NHTSA headquarters, Heidi Coleman—NHTSA ID Division Chief, Holly Billie—IHS, Kenny Hicks—IHS, Nancy Bills—IHS, Dave Wallace—CDC, Pat Tucker—NHTSA Region 6 and Georgia Chakiris, NHTSA Region 6

Administrator. Guests that also attended the meeting included: Catie Willging (PIRE-Albuquerque) and Judge James Zion.

Presentations were made from group members attending in an effort to determine how the programs going on within each agency could benefit from joint partnerships.

In order to facilitate good joint working

relationships, timelines were developed and work groups were assembled.

The team finalized the CPS application and made plans to meet again later in the summer to gauge progress made on group assignments. The tentative dates for the summer meeting will be June 26-27, 2008 in Albuquerque at the Sandia Resort and hotel. For more information, please contact Pat Tucker at (817) 978-0180.

FY09 Project Applications

The BIA IHSP mailed individual Request for Proposal packages to all Tribal Leaders in January 2008. In addition, a federal register notice was posted in March 2008 calling for applications to be submitted by May 1, 2008 for FY09.

A review team is scheduled to meet in Albuquerque to score proposals May 5-7, 2008.

Child Passenger Safety Car Seats

The BIA IHSP, in conjunction and cooperation with IHS has developed and released its application for CPS seats for Tribes. These applications have been widely distributed by the Indian Health Service. The last day to apply for seats for this year is July 31, 2008.



Applications are still available from either the BIA Highway Safety Program Office or by contacting the local IHS Injury Prevention Specialist.

Law Enforcement Advisory Meeting

The BIA IHSP sponsored a Law Enforcement Advisory Committee meeting on March 3, 2008 for the purpose of discussing the dynamics involved in purchasing and placing BAT Mobiles in use in Indian Country. BIA Office of Justice Services Special Agents in Charge, Dan Breninger, District IV and Matt Pryor, District V were in attendance. Over 25 people attended the meeting, including the following Chiefs of Police: John Garcia- Pojoaque, Donovan Trujillo-Ohkay Owingah, Mike Perez-Northern Pueblo Agency, Robert Frenier- Tesuque, Val Panteah, Ramah Navajo, Bill McClure-Southern Pueblo Agency, and George Jojola-Isleta.

After several hours of discussions, the decision was made to purchase 2 BAT

mobiles for each of the 2 BIA districts. The vehicles for District IV would be housed at Isleta and Tesuque. The vehicles purchased for District V would be housed in Billings, MT.

The group is still working out vehicle



specs and agency agreements. The BIA IHSP has been in meetings with its contracts office in order to expedite the order.

The BIA LEL and Law Enforcement Advisory Committee will take the lead on this initiative. Tribal agencies within these 2 districts should contact Bernie Velasquez if you have questions.

These BAT mobiles, once placed in service, will be part of a pilot project. If the pilot goes well, additional vehicles will be purchased for the other BIA OJS districts. "Our hope is to be able to supply tribal law enforcement agencies with the tools they need to get the job done" said Paul Holley - GR and Program Administrator.

Tribal Judicial Outreach Liaison

NHTSA, working through the ABA, has contracted with Judge James W. Zion to serve as a Tribal Judicial Outreach Liaison (JOL) for the BIA Highway Safety Program.

Judge Zion is a graduate of the University of Saint Thomas (MN) and he holds a law degree from the Columbus School of Law Catholic University of America.

Judge Zion, who is located in Albuquerque, has spent the last 25 years practicing law in Indian Country.

Judge Zion has authored many articles on peacemaking and Indian common law and has traveled to Canada, Australia, Bolivia, South Africa, Norway, Switzerland and Mexico to study and discuss traditional indigenous law and procedure.

Judge Zion began his work in Indian Country while representing a Cree grassroots group of the Rocky Boy's Reservation. He is the author of *Navajo Nation Peacemaking: Living Traditional Justice*.

TR Highway Safety Specialist

Please join the BIA IHSP in welcoming Mr. CW Leonsanders. CW joined the Indian Highway Safety Program in February 2008. His responsibilities are to manage and oversee the traffic records program.

CW is a registered member of the Santa Ana Tribe. He began his career with the Santa Ana PD as a dispatcher and became a law enforcement officer. He worked for the police department during the early

1980's. CW left the Santa Ana PD to accept a job with the BIA's Department of Transportation. He worked in the Roads Branch in Portland before returning to Albuquerque.

"My goal is to increase the number of Tribes participating in the **NOCRASHS** program and help Tribes automate their crash systems" he said. CW can be reached at (505) 563-5462.



Law Enforcement Summit

Building on the success of the first law enforcement summit, the BIA IHSP will again host a law enforcement summit. The dates of the summit will be June 24-26, 2008.

The summit location will be the Sandia Resort and Hotel located at 30 Rainbow Road, NE, Albuquerque, NM.

The summit brochures with registration information have been mailed out to all Tribal law enforcement agencies. Only Tribal LE agency officers or Tribal representatives will be eligible to stay in the room block reserved by the BIA IHSP. Others may contact the Sandia directly regarding room availability.



"One question that has come up over and over for the past year has been about the summit" said Patricia Abeyta. "Working through the LE Advisory Committee I

think we will have another successful summit" she continued.

M/Sgt. Warren Warrington (Menominee PD) is the Chairperson of the LE Advisory Committee. "I am excited to be a part of the planning committee this time around" he said. One addition to the summit this year will be an in-service training for LE Officers. The in-service will be an SFST Refresher Course.

The facility is world class with many restaurants, a spa, and golf course as amenities.

If you would like a conference registration brochure, please contact Bernie Velasquez at (505) 563-5374.

Latest Survey Shows Seat Belt Usage Up in Indian Country

The first national survey of seat belt usage in Indian Country showed belt usage was 55.4%. That survey was conducted in 2004. Copies of the publication revealing the results were widely distributed.

In 2006, NHTSA contracted to have another survey done to help the BIA IHSP stay in compliance and meet the requirements of SAFETEA-LU. The survey has

been completed and is going through final edits, however, the news is good. Seat belt usage increased in Indian Country from 55.4% to 61.8%.

"This is great news" said Patricia Abeyta—BIA IHSP Program Coordinator. "We hope to continue to improve the rate as we bring more Tribes on and elevate our participation in programs like Click It or Ticket."



Indian Highway Safety Program Officer of The Year

Officer Terry Long Mandan was honored for being selected as the BIA Indian Highway Safety Program Officer of the Year. Terry Long Mandan is an officer for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, located in South Dakota.

Terry accepted his award at the March meeting of Project Directors in Albuquerque and was honored at home recently by the Tribal Chairman, Joseph Brings Plenty.

In addition to patrolling, Terry also goes

into the schools on the reservation to talk to the students about making good choices when it comes to drinking and driving safety which includes buckling up even though there is no seat belt law on the reservation.

Terry has been an officer for six years with the Cheyenne River Sioux PD. Being an officer is a job he takes seriously and his hard work and dedication have helped lead to a decrease in motor vehicle traffic crashes on the reservation.



Officer Terry Long Mandan and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal, Chairman, Joseph Brings Plenty

Tribal Law Enforcement Embracing Mobilization

The *Don't Shatter The Dream* mobilization has become synonymous with saving lives in Indian Country. Bernie Velasquez feels that is because it is something just for Indian Country. "Even though the Tribal law enforcement agencies participate in the NHTSA mobilizations, the *Don't Shatter The Dream* is just about saving lives in Indian Country" he said. Each year the number of agencies participating grows and this past December was no exception. "Tribes wanting to participate is not the issue" he went on to say, "but getting them to report the information is a different story."

During the FY08 *Don't Shatter The Dream* mobilization, reporting Tribal LE agencies representing a total population of 162,409 worked 1,807 hours of overtime to keep the reservations safe. Of

that number, 309 were worked conducting checkpoints. "Many of these checkpoints were conducted in sub-degree weather which further shows the commitment and pride the officers feel about this program," said Velasquez.

On 24 reservations across the country during this high drinking/driving period, only 1 fatality occurred. Officers made 138 DUI arrests, issued 77 seat belt violations, made 17 felony arrests and apprehended 52 fugitives.

Officers also wrote 613 citations for speeding, made 26 drug arrests and recovered 3 stolen vehicles. Although during the mobilization period there were 67 total crashes, only 14 (20%) were alcohol related. Additional statistics include 17 citations for CPS violations and 126 citations for suspended/revoked licenses.

Don't Shatter The Dream
Dec 21, 2007—Jan 4, 2008



Mobilization Award Winners

Congratulations to the following agencies that were selected through a random drawing to receive an incentive award. Agencies that signed up for the *Don't Shatter The Dream* mobilization AND returned their mobilization reports within the timeframe given were entered into a drawing for either a radar, a pbt or checkpoint equipment.

The following were selected: Menomi-

nee PD (Wisconsin) - Radar, Upper Sioux Tribe (Minnesota) - PBT, Pueblo of Pojoaque (New Mexico) - Radar, Ramah Navajo Tribe (New Mexico) - Radar, Yankton Sioux Tribe (South Dakota) - Radar, Choctaw Tribe of Mississippi—PBT, Yakama Nation (Washington) - PBT, Colorado River Tribe (Arizona) - Radar, Oneida Tribe (Wisconsin) - Radar and Quechan Tribe (California) - Radar.



CLICK IT OR TICKET (DAY AND NIGHT)

Tribal LE officers from all across the country are gearing up to participate in the national Click It or Ticket mobilization.

"This mobilization is an opportunity to help save lives and educate Tribal members on the importance of wearing seat belts" said Val Panteah, Chief of Police, Ramah Navajo. It is especially important since many reservations do not have primary seat belt laws.

The mobilization will run from May 19—June 1, 2008. Tribal law enforcement agencies that need materials to support their checkpoints, saturation patrols and educational presentations during this period should contact the BIA Indian Highway Safety Office.

"In addition to stepping up enforcement during this period, the BIA IHSP is stepping up support to the Tribal law enforcement agencies", said Paul Holley. "We

want to save lives and make a difference" he said.



Frank Iron Heart named DUI Officer of The Year

In his first year as a highway safety officer, Frank Iron Heart, who works for the Rosebud Sioux Tribal Police Department was named DUI Officer of the Year by the BIA Indian Highway Safety Program. Officer Iron Heart was recognized for his achievements in removing drunk drivers from the reservations roads by making 360 DUI arrest last year.

Chief Charles Redcrow accepted the award on behalf of his officer. Frank Iron was injured on January 5, 2008. At 8:30 p.m. Officer Frank Iron Heart, Jr. was responding to a call of a reported drunk driver. The reported drunk driver was driving down the wrong side of the road running cars into the ditch.

Officer Iron Heart passed the reported vehicle and pulled to the side of the road

activating his emergency lights. A tractor trailer was travelling the same direction as Officer Iron Heart. Since all lanes of travel were occupied, the tractor trailer locked up its brakes attempting to stop. The tractor trailer then impacted Officer Iron Heart's police vehicle on the drivers door. A reconstruction was completed and the tractor trailer was traveling 63-72 mph prior to the impact with the

police vehicle.

Officer Iron Heart received multiple internal and facial injuries. He returned to work April 18, 2008.



Officer Iron Heart and the vehicle he was driving at the time of the crash

TRIBAL TR PROGRAM REVAMPED AND UPDATED

The BIA IHSP officially unveiled its new logo for the traffic records program. The new program, Native Owned Crash Records Automated System (for) Highway Safety (NOCRASHS) made its debut in November at the Project Directors training.

Tribal Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TTRCC) members wore T-shirts which spelled out the acronym and gave participants a cheer.

CW Leonsanders said he was sorry he

was not there at the unveiling. The logo concept was developed by the TTRCC and the design drawing was completed by Richard Irving (Menominee Tribal member). The logo is Native friendly and relevant (utilizing a traditional medicine wheel and feathers).

The next meeting of the TTRCC will be June 23, 2008 during the LE Summit. For information please contact CW Leonsanders at (505) 563-5364 if you are interested in being a member of the TTRCC.



BIA OJS DISTRICT 5 REACHING NATIVE YOUTH



Matt Pryor with drunk driving vehicle

Matt Pryor, Special Agent in Charge, BIA OJS District 5 showed members assembled for the LE Advisory meeting the latest tool they use to reach driving age students.

The vehicle is designed to simulate a driver who is impaired by alcohol. A course is usually set up with cones and the driver goes through the course (wearing a seat belt and helmet) the first

time without any simulation. After the first course, the instructor "turns the car on" and shows the driver just how much he or she is not in control.

Several law enforcement officers attending the meeting got behind the wheel to test their abilities. "It was tough" said Officer Anthony Mondragon—Taos Pueblo PD, "much tougher than I thought it would be."

Tribal Artists Lend Talent to BIA IHSP

Two very talented artists have given their support through their talents to the BIA IHSP. These artist took concepts and developed the artwork for two very important Indian Highway Safety Projects.

Richard Irving developed the artwork based on recommendations from the Tribal Traffic Records Coordinating



Committee for the **NOCRASHS** project.

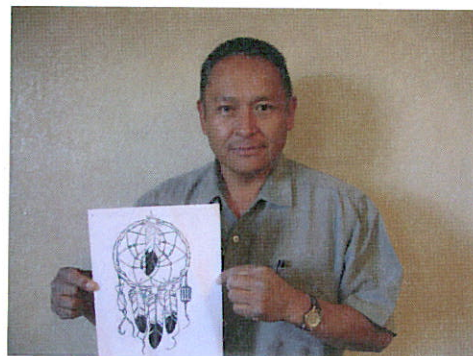
Richard Irving is a Patrol Sergeant with the Menominee Tribal Police Department. Sgt. Irving has worked for the Menominee Tribal Police for about 6 years. Before wising up and joining the Memoninee Tribal Police, he worked for the Menominee County Sheriff's Office for 2 years.

Sgt. Irving is also a veteran of the United States Marine Corps. He proudly served his country for 12 years.

The BIA IHSP logo for its annual *Don't Shatter The Dream* mobilization was in desperate need of a makeover and Kee Lee offered to do the work.

Kee Lee is a 48 year old Navajo artist. He is a veteran of the Persian Gulf War and currently serves a Project Specialist with the Ramah Navajo Community Planning and Development Program.

He has also served as a Corrections Officer for the Ramah Navajo Police Department.



On The Road Again . . .

The last 60 days have been hectic days for the newest members of the BIA Indian Highway Safety Program.

CW Leonsanders has spent quite a bit of time learning all about highway safety and networking. CW attended the Life-savers Conference in Portland, OR this year. "It was one of best experiences I have ever had" said CW. Additionally, he participated in a Financial Manage-

ment in Santa Fe and also CISCO software training in Orlando, Florida. CW has also participated in Project Management Training and Grants Writing sponsored by the BIA IHSP.

Bernie Velasquez has also been burning up the roads since he joined the Indian Highway Safety Program. Bernie traveled to Ft Worth, TX to spend time with Regional LEL Program Manager—Harry

Crum. Bernie then traveled to Oklahoma City for TOPS training. Bernie has also made on-site visits to Tribes in Arizona and participated in Project Management and Grants Writing held in Albuquerque. The BIA IHSP has plans to also send Bernie to visit the NHTSA regional offices so that he can visit with the LEL's and begin to network on outreach to Tribes.

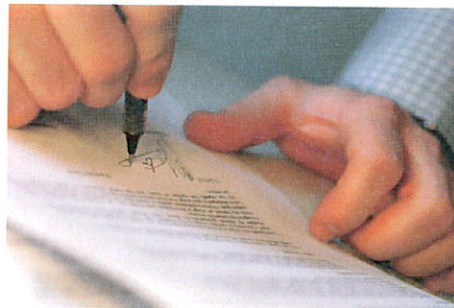
BIA IHSP Undergoes Program Management Review

The BIA Indian Highway Safety Program underwent its Congressionally mandated Management Review by a team from NHTSA on December 10-14, 2007, and a follow up visit on January 14-18, 2008. The IHSP is awaiting the final report, however, based on preliminary findings, it was necessary to hold a refresher Project Management Training on March 4, 2008.

"The refresher training was necessary in order to discuss some of the issues and findings that were related to the Tribal Projects" said Paul Holley.

Tribal project personnel will be apprised of the final report, which we anticipate receiving by July 2008.

"In the meantime, we are determined to move the program forward", said Pat Abeyta.



**BUREAU OF INDIAN
AFFAIRS
INDIAN HIGHWAY SAFETY
PROGRAM**

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Mission Statement

To reduce the number and severity of traffic crashes in Indian Country by supporting Education, Enforcement, and Engineering, as well as Safe Tribal Community Programs.

Vision

To create a Safe Tribal community Environment where roadways in Indian Country are safe for all.



OJS DISTRICT 5 IMPAIRED DRIVING OUTREACH VEHICLE



Teddy Redwing—Leech Lake (who is not impaired) gets her chance to operate the vehicle simulating impairment as she talks on the telephone. Teddy said she just wanted to look like all the other drivers. Teddy took dangerous driving to a whole new level.

Officer Anthony Mondragon (Taos Pueblo PD) is all smiles as he makes it around the course the first time—the expression changed once the switch was flipped and he realized just how much control he did not have of the vehicle.

